

Vermont's congressional delegation on Tuesday sent a letter to President Barack Obama supporting the addition of Washington and Caledonia Counties to Vermont's federal disaster declaration request.

The additional request was made by Gov. Peter Shumlin on Monday in response to damage caused by severe storms, which occurred after the initial disaster declaration request was sent on May 27th. Following that initial request, the delegation wrote a similar letter to the president.

"Considering that this series of disasters has been affecting Vermont continuously for nearly two months, it is very important that the amended request is approved in a timely manner, as well as the request submitted on May 27th, as our need for assistance grows with each passing day," Vermont's congressional delegation wrote.

The full text of the delegation's letter is copied below.

The Honorable Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

We are writing in strong support of the Governor of Vermont's amended request for a federal disaster declaration for the state of Vermont. Due to another wave of disastrous flooding in central Vermont, the State has requested that Washington and Caledonia counties be added to its previous request for assistance.

Since the April 23, 2011 request, severe storms have brought damaging floods to towns along river corridors in those two counties. Properties in both Barre City and Barre Town were severely damaged with many homes lost and residents displaced. Downtown businesses in Barre and Montpelier flooded, resulting in the loss of hundreds of thousands of dollars in inventory and infrastructure. Smaller towns experienced washed-out culverts, roads, and shifting bridge abutments. The state has been diligent in its effort to clear significant debris which poses threats to individuals and public health in both counties.

April flooding of rivers and of Lake Champlain created significant damage across seven counties, and left sodden fields, swollen rivers and wet conditions. When the May 26-27 storms hit with record rainfall, these existing conditions led to immediate flooding in central Vermont, and exacerbated flooding downstream. The State estimates that expenditures in flood clean-up and repair will exceed \$1,240,000 and thus qualify for federal assistance.

The impact of this disaster on businesses and private properties most likely warrants Individual Assistance in addition to Public Assistance, and we ask that you include both in your declaration.

Considering that this series of disasters has been affecting Vermont continuously for nearly two months, it is very important that the amended request is approved in a timely manner, as well as the request submitted on May 27th, as our need for assistance grows with each passing day.

If we can provide further information or support for the State's request for a federal Major Disaster Declaration with both Public and Individual Assistance, please contact us. Thank you for your timely consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Patrick Leahy

Bernard Sanders

Peter Welch